if reasonably practicable, and as the enemy may give us a chance we should be ready to take advantage of it. When all is said and done, there is really no satisfactory alternative to continuing the battle we and the French have started.

9. I have for a long time past urged on the War Cabinet the necessity of our taking much greater control over the War, for I have always felt that a time would come when the French Government would break down. They have broken down and the only remedy is for us to take charge and at once. I attach a note by Lieut.-General Wilson which supports this view."

In view of the scornful references to "the failure of the Nivelle offensive" which afterwards became *-Robertson's one ° ^ ^e c^chcs of the Staff, it is interest-changing views ing to record Sir William Robertson's of Nivelle* deliberate summary of the result obtained, *offensive* which he put on record a fortnight after the battle had been fought. In his opinion we had achieved " more than he had expected." Between the French and ourselves we had " made a much bigger hole in the German reserves than we had thought was possible in the time." So pleased was he with the progress made in this particular offensive that he was anxious to continue it. As to our general policy, he was back at the strategy of attrition. He

had no other idea in his head except exhausting the enemy's reserves. He does not seem to have contemplated the possibility that we might at the same time be wasting our own men and that the success of attrition is a question of the balance of wastage.

He was very pessimistic, even contemptuous, about American help. He also took a gloomy view of the